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Editor: Mrs. Mary Kinloy Ingraham, M.A.
Acadia University Library
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Christmas

The time draws near the birth of Christ;
The moon is hid; the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round
From far and near, on mead and moor.
Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,
That now dilate and now decrease,
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,
Peace and goodwill to all mankind.

Tennyson.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
(If ye have power to touch our senses so:)
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time,
And let the bass of Heaven's deep organ blow,
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

Milton.

The President's Message.

Another year comes to an end, a year of war and rumors of war. It would seem a far from ideal time to review progress in library activity but the picture is not so black as it might at first appear.

On the Dominion front, a Canadian Library Council has been formed. Representative of every part of Canada, it is an organization capable of speaking on library matters for the whole country. It is to be hoped that it will give real leadership in our most pressing problem; bringing effective library service to the majority of Canadians who are now in such need of it. But no more of this just now, for we shall have a full report of the formation and aims of the Council in our next issue.

In the Atlantic Command area, the Canadian Legion War Services Library has now 13,000 new and carefully selected books in circulation. The response has been most gratifying. Last week, when the Library at Debert reopened for the new Division there, the surprise and delight of the men on finding such a collection of books made it a field day. In the first five minutes we circulated such titles as "How to Listen to Music", "Anna Karenina", "An Anthology of Modern Poetry", "Berlin Diary", "Out of the Night", and a great variety of technical books. There were requests for everything under the sun, including "The Keys of the Kingdom" and "A Study in Preventing Crime."

It is gratifying that even with a war in progress there is one spot in Nova Scotia which feels that it would like to go ahead with plans for a Regional Library. Sydney and at least one other unit in Cape Breton are carrying on an active campaign. The difficulties are great, especially the problem of erecting a building in wartime, but there never appeared to be a more solid, representative group of people pushing it. There are people there who realize that in the great task of reconstruction after the war a library in Sydney would be a real bulwark in a time of confusion. At a meeting held in Sydney on Friday, November 28, with Rev. J.A. Pue-Gilchrist as chairman, a committee of fifteen citizens was appointed to put the thing across -- if at all possible.

On the international front light comes from many sources. We have Walter G. Harrap, President of the Publishers Association of London, saying: "It is our Government's belief that books are an essential part of the nation's life in war as in peace and that without books we should become a people deprived of vision and therefore of that very freedom for which we are asked to make sacrifices."

Marion Gilroy

Note

The following paper was prepared by Prof. Longley for the annual Conference of the M. L. A. convened at Acadia University, Wolfville, N.S., last June, and is published by request of the Association. In the writer's absence it was read by Prof. H.F. Sipprell.

Historical Records in War and Peace.

by

Prof. R. S. Longley

History has always been a difficult subject to define. Polybius considered it a record of past politics from which rulers of his own day might draw lessons. A more modern writer, Sir John Seeley, declares that politics are vulgar when they are not liberalized by history, and history fades into mere literature when it loses sight of its relation to practical politics. That is, history is politics, but it is more than politics. Mediaeval scribes thought of it in terms of the development of the Christian Church; Carlyle called it the record of a few Great Men; and Turgot described it as the story of humanity as a whole, ever progressing through decay and revival, each age linked equally with those which have gone before and those that are to come. Recent writers accept Turgot's definition with elaborations and modifications. History is the biography of society. It is Time's follower and must record with proper degrees of emphasis what time brings forth. It is a story of change; for, if governments, economic institutions, and social customs remained the same, men could read the past in the world about them without resort to historical records. Since these things do change, any evidence of man's deeds and achievements, whether written or unwritten, is an historical record, although it will be obvious that not all records are of equal importance. It is the purpose of this paper to point out the need for collecting and preserving these records, and the difficulties which beset the historian, both in times of peace and in a world at war. The paper is no sense exhaustive; it is intended to be suggestive and to provoke discussion.

"A wise nation", said Joseph Howe, "preserves its records, gathers up its muniments, decorates the tombs of its illustrious dead, repairs its great public structures, and fosters pride and love of country by perpetual reference to the sacrifices and glories of the past". Unfortunately, the people and even the Governments of many nations are not wise, and they forget that where there are no records there can be no history. The nineteenth century historian, Droysen, sought to make this fact clear to his own and succeeding generations. "The data for historical investigation are not things which have disappeared", he declared, "but things which are present here and now, whether recollections of what was done, or remnants of things that have existed and events that have occurred". This lesson needs to be taught to each generation, that neither our written nor unwritten records may be lost or destroyed.

Unwritten historical records are to be found wherever the hand of man has wrought. They consist of implements of war and peace, dwellings, public buildings, and the like. In olden days no conscious effort was made to preserve these records, with the result that they are all too few. Fires, wars, and the ravages of time have caused them to crumble and decay, but where restorations

and excavations have been possible, these visible evidences of man's activity tell their own story. In more recent years many of these important relics have been gathered into museums where they are available to those who are trained to use them and for the information of the public. Modern museums vary in size from the great British Museum, now nearly two centuries old, where the floor space is so great that it requires two hours to walk through it without looking at the exhibits, to the much smaller collections of libraries and learned societies. In 1939 there were some fifteen important museums in London alone; other large European cities contained similar institutions. Their present condition can better be imagined than described. The most valuable relics have been removed to places of safety and will not be available to students until the end of the war. Many relics which could not be carried away have been destroyed by bombs and fire. International conflicts cause irreparable damage to historical records.

Fortunately the increasing interest and wealth on this continent are bringing priceless historical relics to the United States and Canada. New York has a number of large museums; and lesser collections are to be found in Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, and other cities. All of these contain many local as well as foreign relics. In Canada the Ontario Museum in Toronto has reached considerable proportions. Nor have we been idle in the Maritime Provinces. In many instances the Dominion Government has rendered valuable assistance by erecting cairns and plaques on historic sites; restorations have been made at the Port Royal Habitation, the Grand Pre Park, the Haliburton House at Windsor, and the forts at Louisburg and Beausejour. These buildings are open to the public and they contain small, but important museums. The work of restoration has been interrupted by the war, and is not likely immediately to be resumed. Our libraries and archives rendered a valuable service in supplying information for the use of the architects and builders.

One of the problems created by modern warfare is the historic building, which cannot be placed in a museum or carried away to a place of safety. Up to the time of writing the great buildings of Athens and Rome have been spared, although we do not know for how long. But what of historic England? Who does not mourn the wanton destruction of old Westminster Hall, the Commons Chamber, and the beautiful churches? The Tower, Saint Paul's Cathedral must be restored if they survive further bombings. Shall we ever again be able to visit the Poet's Corner of the Abbey or to see the tombs of Kings, Queens, Princes, and Statesmen who made England great? We belong to an age which has seen millions of dollars spent to discover the secrets of ancient Egypt, Greece, Italy, and Crete. Today the descendants of those methodical German archaeologists who led many of the earlier excavations are dropping high explosives and incendiary bombs upon our future historical records. Greece and Crete have been devastated; the Law Courts, Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, the Tower, and many other buildings too numerous to mention have been almost destroyed. These things belong to future generations, yet men destroy them and they are replaced by

a few monuments of stone and bronze. Over such records we unfortunately have no control, but we are surrounded by local relics which should be protected and preserved. Librarians can assist greatly in this work.

Let us now turn for a short time to a discussion of the better known historical records, those which are written.

Originally men recorded laws, edicts, instructions, and words of praise for some King or Prince, on stone. Later clay tablets were used, and many of these were collected to form our first Libraries. This movement was accelerated by the use of papyrus, parchment, and paper, which made the storage of documents increasingly easy.

Under the early despots men could not write objectively about the past for fear of consciously or unconsciously making comparisons with the present which were not flattering to the ruler. In Greek and Roman times this fear disappeared and historians endeavoured to stimulate the life of their own day by recalling the glories of the past. "Can anyone be so indifferent", asked Polybius, "not to care to know by what means and under what kind of a polity almost the whole inhabited world was conquered and brought under the dominion of the single city of Rome"? Since Polybius wished to supply his readers with authentic examples from the past, he sought to make his statements truthful and accurate, otherwise he would be telling an idle and profitless tale. Cicero laid down the first important rule of historiography when he declared that the historian must not say anything that is false or has the slightest suspicion of partiality. Yet Polybius, calm master of world history though he was, could not write altogether impartially of the history of the Italian peninsula which was the immediate tradition of his elders; and the mediaeval writers made little effort to base their records on actual documents. The humanists were keen investigators, but they were chiefly interested in style. Strangely enough it was the German scholars of the nineteenth century, particularly Niebuhr and Ranke, who renewed the old Roman demand for historical accuracy. "We must be able to say in the sight of God I have not knowingly nor without earnest investigation written anything which is not true", Niebuhr declared, and Ranke went further. "I see the time coming", he wrote, "when we shall not build modern history on the accounts even of contemporary historians, except where they possessed original knowledge, much less on derivative writers, but on the relations of eye-witnesses and the ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS. This so-called scientific method has become increasingly popular in our own century, and demands that our original records, as well as our books and other secondary sources, be preserved in archives and Libraries where they will be available to investigators.

Extreme nationalism and armed conflicts arouse passions and prejudices, thus making accurate documents almost impossible. In fact, it is the descendants of the generation of Niebuhr and Ranke who show the least regard for truth. "The sole criterion of whether an enterprise is right or wrong is success", Hitler tells us in his

famous, or infamous book, Mein Kampf. "We take sides in history," declared another prominent Nazi, "We do not want to teach unbiased history". Once it was assumed that Government documents were reasonably accurate and authentic; under totalitarian despots this assumption is no longer valid, and the exigencies of war seem to require even the democracies to equivocate.

The lesson to be drawn from this situation is obvious; we must be suspicious of every official statement until we can prove it is not issued for purposes of propaganda. History, to be above evasion and dispute, must stand on authentic documents, not opinions, half-truths, and falsehoods. We ought to be sure that many different sources are available for comparison and analysis. Duplicate records are also important in this age because of the perishable nature of modern printer's paper.

It should be remembered that historical records must not be discarded or destroyed, even when they have been used by a competent historian and the results of his research published in book form. As generations of historians come and go they themselves become a part of history. Each generation prefers to write its history for itself, and from original documents; not because the facts change, but because additional records are constantly being discovered and new viewpoints appear. War makes this re-writing increasingly necessary, for history written in the midst of conflict is seldom objective. It is the opinion of Professor Gooch that few of the records written during the first World War deserved to survive; the same will be true of the second World War. Twenty-five years ago the Dominion Government appointed an official observer with the troops overseas. The man chosen is now Lord Beaverbrook. He was a journalist rather than an historian, but his Canada in Flanders was a useful work. At present, a trained historian, Professor C. P. Stacey, is with the Canadian army in England. He is doing, and no doubt will do, excellent work, but no one man can gather all of the facts, even overseas, and on the home front he can do nothing. It is therefore necessary that our archives and libraries continue to collect material which may be available in the years when historians are able to use them without fear of being considered disloyal or neutral in a conflict of ideals. The public should be made historically minded while the records are extant.

In recent years the Governments of the United States and Canada, with the assistance of certain philanthropic organizations have secured copies and photostats of many important documents dealing with the history of this continent. The film as a means of providing even small libraries with historical material is still in its infancy, but librarians should watch the movement with keen interest. The work has been interrupted by the war, and may not be resumed for some years, but resumed it undoubtedly will be. In the meantime we must make the best use of what we have. The Colleges and Graduate Schools are assisting in the preservation and use of records by requiring documented theses and reports in limited fields. When this work is properly done, the student is not only taught to find documents, but to learn their value. He thus comes

to realize the importance of Rankin's rule, that the only worth while history is that which is true. The New Brunswick Museum, the Government collections at the provincial capitals, and the Archives at Ottawa, Halifax, Toronto, and other cities, are rendering valuable assistance, and the libraries are supplementing the work of the archives. In addition to having as many books as possible on every field of knowledge, our libraries might seek to specialize on the collection of material for the study of local history.

One other service which libraries may render to historians is to make available printed copies of original sources in every field of history. A generation ago history was memorized from an assigned text; today we seek to create in each student an historical imagination; not, however, the imagination of a novelist who takes liberties with truth, but the imagination of a detective or an explorer who is seeking truth and who sees more than the ordinary person, even when both are looking at the same thing.

To sum up, A wise nation preserves its records, but it does not stop there. It instructs its youth in the proper kind of patriotism and citizenship by the judicious use of these records. Clio is at once a pleasing and an exacting Muse. The youth of today should be taught to untangle principles from parties, truth from fiction, and liberty from tyranny. They should also be taught that Macbeth was wrong in thinking life no more than a walking shadow, "A poor player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more". History teaches us that our civilization is the cumulative result of the work of untold millions whose names are not found in books.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life,
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

NOTES AND PERSONALS

Miss Dorothy Cullen writes from the Prince Edward Island Libraries.

Library Meeting. A meeting of the local custodians of the Prince Edward Island Libraries was held at Prince of Wales College on September 22 and 23. The afternoon and morning sessions were spent in consideration of general and local library problems, centering mainly about the book collections. The discussion, led by the Headquarters staff and joined by all present, provided a stimulating and valuable interchange of ideas. On Monday evening were shown sound films on Canada's war effort, supplied by the National Film Board. Tea was served at the close of the afternoon meeting.

During October and November, Mr. Chandler has put on moving picture shows in almost all the library centres to assist the local committees in raising funds for the upkeep of branch library premises.

As part of their observance of Book Week, the Charlottetown Public Library held their first story hour on Saturday morning, Nov. 8.

It was attended by about sixty children of junior grade. The Georgetown Library also celebrated Book Week with a story hour for the primary pupils.

Another new venture in which one of our library branches is taking part is Time and Tide, published by the Junior Library and Students of the Georgetown School. It is an eight-page hectographed sheet in two colours, with a wealth of local news, stories and poems. The November issue features a page of book reviews by various children.

Mrs. Charles MacKenzie has been appointed to the staff of the Legislative and Public Library, Charlottetown, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Miss Jean Fraser.

The book reviews presented over CFCY by the Prince Edward Island Libraries in previous winters will be resumed in December. The time of the broadcasts, at least for the first month, will be 10:30 a.m. on Thursdays.

Halifax Libraries.

The Libraries of Halifax are endeavouring to serve the new comers to the city as well as their regular patrons.

The Public and University Libraries have extended their facilities to Service Men. The Provincial Science Library and the Public Archives are open certain evenings during the week for the benefit of those unable to attend through the day.

Dalhousie Medical Library has been asked to supply book service to the new School of Social Sciences.

King's Library, now housed in the Stack Room, is still open to students and town people, and in addition serves the resident officers of the Training Establishment.

Halifax Library Club.

Mr. McCombs of the New York Public Library was the guest of the Halifax Library Club at its October meeting.

Dr. J.W. Falconer, of Pine Hill Divinity Hall, and Mr. Frank Murphy, of the Department of Education, were guest speakers at recent meetings of the Library Club, the former speaking on Illustration and the latter on Visual Education.

Miss Zaidee Harris has joined the King's College Library Staff.

Mrs. Doan Hatfield, formerly on the King's Staff, is now living in Pictou.

We are very glad to report that Miss Mary C. Macdonald of the St. Frances Xavier University Library, who has been suffering from arthritis, is now able to do part time work at the Library and hopes to work full time after the New Year.

We are very sorry to learn Miss E.G. Shaw of the Saint John Free Public Library is seriously ill again.

Mrs. Howard Macmillan (nee Helen Glendinning) former member of the Saint John Free Public Library, was recently visiting in the Maritimes.

Miss E. Vaughan Librarian of the Saint John Free Public Library has just returned from Yarmouth where she has been visiting during her three weeks leave of absence.